



**The Shelter for Women
Hartford, CT**

Testimony Re: Bills 5430, 219, 316

**5430 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
FROM OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES TO THERAPEUTIC
GROUP HOMES IN THE STATE**

219 - AN ACT CONCERNING STATE CONTRACT REDUCTIONS

**316 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION ON NONPROFIT HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES**

To the Honorable Co-Chairs and Members of the Human Services
Subcommittee of Appropriations

My name is Margaret W. Nareff, Executive Director of The Shelter for Women, a 121-year old organization that provides care for adolescent girls at a residential treatment center in Hartford and a therapeutic group home in Manchester. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony to you regarding proposed bills that will affect the ability of providers like The Shelter for Women to serve clients.

As co-chair of AEGIS for CT Nonprofits, I represent scores of private providers across the state that care for children in state custody who support RB 5430. Currently children are being served out of state while group home beds remain available in Connecticut and we want to work with the Department of Children and Families to bring these children home to continue their care when they are able. We support this bill wholeheartedly and stand ready to work with the Department and the Legislature to treat children in need here in Connecticut.

However we risk not being able to do so if providers like my organization and others face closing or program and service reductions due to funding shortfalls. Therefore we urge your support for state contract adjustments and the establishment of a nonprofit commission (RB 219 and 316 respectively). RB 219 will permit private contractors like me to adjust our budgets accordingly

when cuts are inevitable. This is not only a good business practice but will eliminate bureaucratic red tape, further saving precious state dollars. We are the ones who know our businesses best and where cuts can most reasonably be made; we cannot be held to a standard of maintaining services uninterrupted with fewer dollars in our contracts. RB 316 will bring all the parties together to solve the enormous challenges facing our state in both the public and private non-profit sectors.

Each of these bills represents a watershed moment in the role of nonprofits in Connecticut. If funding is cut, the services so many of our citizens need now and in the future will evaporate, placing an even greater burden on state coffers. The commission can address this, and other challenging issues, in cooperation with the legislature, governor's office and state agencies. Solutions can be found if we agree to have everyone at the table together working to find them.

Thank you for your consideration.